

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 28 and 29 have been canceled. Claims 1-27 and 30-35 are pending in the application, of which claims 1-20, 30 and 31 are allowed, claims 21, 25 and 26 are rejected, claims 22-24 and 27 is objected to, and claims 32-35 are new.

Claims 21, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kaneko (U.S. Pat. No. 5,882,162) in view of Jedlicka (U.S. Pat. No. 3,022,197). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The examiner asserts that Kaneko discloses all of the features recited in claim 21 except for a layer of elastically deformable material disposed between the male and female members. For this feature, the examiner relies on the disclosure of Jedlicka. The examiner states that "it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kaneko to incorporate a layer of elastically deformable material...to provide a secure threaded connection."

Applicant respectfully submits that there is no motivation or suggestion to make the examiner-noted modification. First, there is no suggestion by the references themselves to make the modification asserted by the examiner.

Second, with respect to the Kaneko disclosure, when the male member (driving screw) is engaged with the female member (holes extending through layered substrates as a result of the driving screw), there is no *space* between the male member outer diameter and the female member inner diameter, as is recited by claim 21¹. *See, e.g.*, Figures 2(b), 3(b), and 4(b) of Kaneko. Since there is no space between the male member outer diameter and the female member inner diameter, there is simply no void present in the Kaneko configuration to accept a layer of elastically deformable material as taught by Jedlicka.

Third, there is no motivation to combine the teachings of Kaneko and Jedlicka. Kaneko is directed to a screw that is designed to "reduce the deformation and vibration" associated with driving the screw into a light gauge material, "which in turn, eliminates

¹ For illustration purposes only, Applicant directs the examiner's attention to Figures 6, 8 and 9a of their application, and the corresponding written description on pages 5-6. A female member embodiment 20 provided by the present invention is shown in Figure 6. Female member 20 has an inner diameter labeled as element 26. A complementary male member embodiment 30 is shown in Figure 8, having an outer diameter labeled as element 36. As shown in Figure 9a, a space exists between the outer diameter of male member 30 and the inner diameter of female member 20 when the male member is disposed in the female member.

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reduction in fastening force and load stress" (col. 2, lns. 23-36). Jedlicka is directed to "a method for securing threaded connections against the loosening effect of shocks, vibrations, etc. (col. 1, lns. 9-11). The method disclosed by Jedlicka includes interposing a quantity of polysiloxane between engaged threaded parts (*id.* at col 2, lns. 37-39). The objects and purposes of the two references are totally unrelated, and thus there is no motivation to combine them as suggested by the examiner.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection.

New Claims

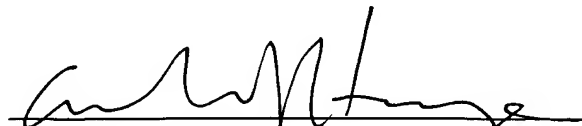
Applicant has added new claims 32 and 33, each of which depends from claim 21. New claim 32 recites that a decrease in diameter of the male member outer diameter is followed by an increase in diameter. New claim 33 is similar to claim 32, but recites an opposite directional change of the male member outer diameter. Neither Kaneko nor Jedlicka, taken alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features recited in claims 32 and 33.

The examiner noted that claims 28 and 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 21. Applicant accordingly has added new claims 34 and 35, respectively.

Formal Drawings

The current office action does not indicate a status of the formal drawings submitted with the application. Applicant respectfully requests acceptance of the formal drawings.

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Andrew J. Hagerty
Registration No. 44,141

Woodcock Washburn LLP
One Liberty Place - 46th Floor
Philadelphia PA 19103
Telephone: (215) 568-3100
Facsimile: (215) 568-3439